

REMARKS

I. Status Of The Claims

Claims 1-58 are pending in this Application.

Claims 4, 5, 15-17, and 23-58 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Claim 1 is objected to “because of [an] ... informal[ity]”.

Claims 1-3, 6-14, 18-20, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki (U.S. Patent No. 5,497,215) in view of Heller (U.S. Patent No. 6,396,539).

Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki in view of Heller and Akashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,615,399).

With this response claim 1 is amended.

II. Objection to Claim 1

The Examiner has objected to claim 1 “because of [an] ... informal[ity]”.

With this response, the Applicant amends claim 1, and respectfully submits that the objection is moot in view of the amendment.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected each of claims 1-3, 6-14, and 18-22 in view of Heller.

The Applicant respectfully observes that the Heller reference was filed on February 27, 1998. While the present application was filed on November 9, 1998, priority is claimed to Japanese Application JP 9-313432, filed November 14, 1997 and Japanese

Application JP 10-009064, filed January 20, 1998. Heller is thus not properly available as prior art to be applied against this application. Submitted herewith is a copy of the certified English translation of Japanese Application JP 9-313432.

In view of at least the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3, 6-14, and 18-22 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully submits that this Application is in condition for allowance for which action is earnestly solicited.

If a telephone conference would facilitate prosecution of this Application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4478. **A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.**

Furthermore, in the event that a further extension of time is required, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of

time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to the above-noted Deposit Account and
Order No.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

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By:



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